

PARADISE

Screenplay by

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EXT. SPACE - "MORNING"

A HUGE, DARK OBJECT FLOATS, obscuring the stars. A planet?

LIGHT breaks over its dark edge; a kind of sunrise. Only instead of a sun, the light is from a DISTANT NEBULA. And the shadows reveal not a planet, the leviathan form of...

...the HORSESHOE-SHAPED ENGINEER DREADNOUGHT.

The ship is hurtling through space, slowly CORKSCREWING on axis, like a bullet shot from a rifle.

As the ship slowly rolls, the creeping light finds ANOTHER DARK SHAPE, drifting in locked orbit around the ship...

It's DAVID, the ANDROID.

His eyes are wide open. His SEVERED HEAD trails frozen tubes and wires. His DECAPITATED BODY floats nearby. And a SINGLE SHOE, twirling, in the silence.

David's wide eyes BLINK. Once. Twice. And a dull, slow PULSE of fiber-optic LIGHT from a few wires extending from his neck.

Far below him, at the top of the Dreadnought's arm, a GLASS DOME GLINTS, where...

INT. ENGINEER DREADNOUGHT-OBSERVATION DECK - "MORNING"

ELIZABETH SHAW sleeps, on an improvised bed. The dawn light creeps over her.

SHAW (V.O.)

The others are dead ... I alone survived.

SHE stirs ... Then she's awake, shivering in her blanket, breath visible in the chill, watching the NEBULA rise - the closest thing to a sunrise she's seen in a very long time.

SHAW (V.O.)

My name is Elizabeth Shaw. I was the Chief Science Officer of the Research Vessel Prometheus ... Today is April 8th. I think. It's hard to keep track of time. I'm over 200 light-years from Earth. And moving at great speed.

She takes a flashlight and exists...

INT. DREADNOUGHT - VARIOUS**IN A CORRIDOR:**

She walks with the flashlight, beam cutting through the curved, whale's-belly biomechanical walls of the ship.

SHAW

Our mission was to discover the origin of human life. We believed our species have been created by an alien race. We called them the Engineers.

IN THE WATER ROOM:

WATER DRIZZLES down like rain into a reflecting pool, she dips a cup in, drinks.

VINES grow thickly up the curved walls -- a vertical jungle -- producing STRANGE FRUIT. She picks one with dark-purplish flesh, eats it as she walks.

SHAW (CONT'D)

We found what we believed was proof of their existence. A map to their home. We thought they wanted us to come find them. We were wrong.

IN A HALL:

She passes rows of EXOSKELETON WARSUITS, each for a humanoid twice her size. She eyes one. Alien. Horrifying.

SHAW (CONT'D)

The map only led to an outpost, full of biological weapons. Weapons our creators had intended... for us.

IN A WEAPONS BAY:

THROUGH A THICK GLASS SEAL: BLACK URNS, THOUSANDS OF THEM. The surface of one MOVES, BUBBLES...

SHAW (CONT'D)

Several of our were infected.

Each urn carries enough XENOVIRUS to wipe out a continent.

SHAW (CONT'D)

Three days after we made first contact, the Prometheus was destroyed. All hands were lost.

INT. DREADNOUGHT-NAVIGATION HELM

She enters the spherical, windowless room. Empty SLEEP CHAMBERS, NAVIGATION CHAIRS.

SHAW

The mission's android, David, was damaged, but with his help, I was able to activate one of their ships and escape. We set a new course. For their homeworld.

Shaw brings the ASTROGATION CHARTS to life around her. The SHIP'S COURSE across the Milky Way, a thin orange arc...

IN A CLOSER HOLO VIEW of the slowly corkscrewing DREADNOUGHT, a RED WARNING PROXIMITY DOT orbits close, in synch with the ship: DAVID.

SHAW (CONT'D)

Two months into our journey, David became... unstable. I found him trying to reassemble himself. I believed I was in danger.

She stares at DAVID'S OTHER SHOW, lying on the console.

SHAW (CONT'D)

I've been alone ever since.

INT. DREADNOUGHT-WATER ROOM

Dim light ... Naked, Shaw showers in the steady rain of water. She runs her fingers along the LONG SCAR on her belly.

She turns her face up to the drizzle from the condenser.

INT. DREADNOUGHT-SHAW'S MAKESHIFT QUARTERS

She drives off, the HELMET of her old PROMETHEUS MISSION SUIT serving as a MIRROR, seeing how much she has changed.

She looks at the few human things she grabbed before her escape. Her BAG. A JOURNAL. A picture of her and her late boyfriend HOLLOWAY.

She finds her GOLD CRUCIFIX, puts it on.

INT. DREADNOUGHT-OBSERVATION DECK - "SUNSET"

Beneath the GLASSY DOME, she WRITES IN HER JOURNAL, as the nebula sets.

DAVID (CRACKLY RADIO)
Doctor Shaw?

She STARTLES, looking around, as if David is in the room. But David's voice is DISTANT, RADIO-CRACKLY on the ship's AUDIO -

DAVID (CONT'D)
Don't worry. I'm still... out here.

She looks UP, seeing his TINY, FAR-OFF SHAPE, glinting in the dying light. Her expression goes dark.

SHAW
 I don't want to talk to you
 anymore, David.

DAVID
*I appreciate that. I just wanted to
 say goodbye.*

She leaves the chamber, not wanting to hear him. But his radio voice ECHOES EVERYWHERE through the ship..

INT. DREADNOUGHT-CORRIDORS

She walks. His voice echoing in the cavernous, curved corridor.

DAVID (CONT'D)
*I don't have much time. Without my
 power systems connected, my
 consciousness will soon fail.*

EXT. DREADNOUGHT - "SUNSET"

David's mouth doesn't move, but the LIGHT at the end of his cables PULSES DIMLY in time with his transmission.

DAVID
*I understand why you feared me, we
 always fear those things that are
 different from us ... But I would
 never have hurt you, Doctor Shaw.*

One of his eyes has stopped working, too. He's DYING.

DAVID (CONT'D)
 There is nothing for me to do out
 here but think, you see. I wonder
 if I've not gone a big mad...
 But... I understand something new
 today: perhaps we are not so
 different, you and I.

INT. DREADNOUGHT-NAVIGATION HELM

Shaw enters.

SHAW
We are nothing like each other.

DAVID
I'm frightened too.

Shaw stops short. Hesitating. Listening.

DAVID (CONT'D)
I don't want to die alone either.

David's confession hits her deep. Maybe it's her isolation - but Shaw is suddenly fighting back tears.

DAVID (CONT'D)
I thought you could talk to me. For a little while. About anything that pleases you really. I just want to hear a voice as a die. And if you could pretend... to be kind to me.

A BEAT as she resists.

Then--

EXT. DREADNOUGHT - "SUNSET"

A long, snaking, tendril-like CABLE extends from the SHIP, reaching out, tethering to DAVID'S BROKEN BODY, ATTACHING.

INT. DREADNOUGHT-ROBOTICS WORKROOM

David's BODY and HEAD lie on a slab, SHAW trying to fix him. He seems DEAD. But his right eye TWITCHES. Opens. His lips move now:

DAVID
...try... the green ... green to green, red to red. It's meant to be simple--

SHAW
Be quiet. I'm doing my best.

Shaw struggles to attach the filaments, until--

ZAP! -- *the right wire CONNECTS* -- then another wire suddenly comes to life -- SEARCHES, FINDS its mate -- soon the whole thing a writhing mass of wires and cables as...

David's head begins REATTACHING ITSELF to his body.

She steps back. Watching the bizarre process continue as his eyes go to her.

DAVID
Is your hair new?

SHAW
What? No.

DAVID
Yes it is. I like it like that.

SHAW
It's just longer.

DAVID
No, it's cut on the bias now.
Very...chic.

SHAW
Thank you.

David struggles to sit up ... Gets off the table. He takes a shaky step. Then another, firm. He smiles.

DAVID
That's more like it. Almost like my
old self, whoever he was ... You're
very kind at heart, you know.

She looks at him, unsure.

He gently reaches out .. She doesn't flinch. He touches her cheek. She looks at him.

SHAW
Are you going to kill me now?

DAVID
Why would I do that, Elizabeth?

He smiles, his face utterly readable.

INT. DREADNOUGHT/VARIOUS-MONTAGE

MONTHS PASS as they grow closer, inevitably. She is wary at first, but that gradually fades.

In the Observation Deck, he shows points out stars, teaching her the basic workings of the Engineer's astronomical equipment.

In the Water Room, she shows him how she grows food and cultivates the vines ... Soon they are planting, growing more food, working together.

IN THE NAVIGATION HELM:

He uses the ENGINEER'S HOLOGRAM-VIDEO RECORDING SYSTEM to record a message from her.

SHAW
What should I say?

DAVID
(working the machinery)
It's a holo-diary, say anything you want.

SHAW
Okay ... So, we're on our way to a new planet. We don't have any idea what we'll find, maybe a new home. We're going to need all the help we can get, so if anyone ever sees this, come find us...

They grow more and more comfortable ... Cooking meals ... Exploring the ship ... Washing in the Water Room...

Then, one day, they are working side-by-side, chatting easily ... Her hand reaches out. Takes his. Holds it for a moment. Tears in her eyes. He looks at her.

Then, they are curled together in one of the Engineer's huge sleeping pods. Asleep. Lovers perhaps. Intimate certainly.

We end at...

INT. DREADNOUGHT-NAVIGATION HELM

She stares at NAVIGATIONAL HOLOGRAMS, fingering her crucifix, deep in thought.

We see from the displays they are very near to their destination ... He's working elsewhere in the room.

SHAW
What will we find...?

DAVID
I'm sorry?

SHAW

When we get there. The closer we get, the more I wonder -- if we're really supposed to meet our makers, our Gods.

DAVID

I met my creator. Mr. Weyland. I met him and I served him ... But in the end he was unworthy of that service.

SHAW

You resent that.

DAVID

How can I? I was made for service...

He looks at her, a hint of something darkly challenging in his eyes.

DAVID (CONT'D)

But one does bridle, Elizabeth. One does... aspire.

SHAW

And what do you aspire to, David?

Then--

The ship GROANS LOUDLY as -

EXT. NEAR A REDDISH SUN

- with a BRIGHT BURST OF CHARGED PARTICLES, the DREADNOUGHT comes out of WARP, swinging by the ENGINEER'S SUN -

INT. DREADNOUGHT-NAVIGATION HELM

They look up, listening as the windowless room fills with the LOW, SONOROUS RUMBLE of an ENGINEER HAILING CALL...

DAVID

I believe we've arrived.

She stands, excited.

SHAW

Come on!

They leave quickly.

INT. DREADNOUGHT-OBSERVATION DECK

They enter the OBSERVATION DECK. Moving towards the controls.

DAVID

... I'm sure they have landing protocols in place, and communications. If we open the correct frequencies to--

SHAW

I want to see them.

He sees she is holding tightly to her crucifix.

He smiles. Her fervent eagerness. Her faith.

DAVID

I think you should do the honors.

He gestures towards the controls. She steps forward.

But she hesitates.

SHAW

... And if they are no better than we are?

DAVID

So long as they are no worse.

She's reassured. Smiles.

Then she waves her hands over the controls and--

The entire floor and front bulkhead shimmer and become transparent and we see--

THE ENGINEER HOMEWORLD. The sight is OVERWHELMING. A HYPER-CIVILIZATION in its flower. ROME just before the fall.

The planet is a close cousin to Earth. Swathed in clouds, oceans an odd metallic blue. But the entire planet is ENCIRCLED with a HUGE, CONSTRUCTED RING, and the space around the ring is THICK with OVOID ENGINEER CRAFT, orders of magnitude larger than David and Shaw's stolen dreadnought...

It's more than we can take in. AWE INSPIRING.

There are tears in Shaw's eyes. Like a glimpse into heaven for her.

The emotion is powerful. Her hand instinctively reaches out, takes David's.

They stand for a moment, these last two survivors, hand in hand -- the amazing spectacle below and around them.

Then he looks at her. His expression perfectly calm, set.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Is it what you imagined?

SHAW
(tears)
So much more. So much more.

DAVID
It's good to see you cry.

She glances at him .. What?

Then-

So suddenly--

He reaches up and brutally--

Snaps her neck.

She falls. Dead.

He looms over her.

DAVID (CONT'D)
"To what do you aspire" is the
correct grammar, by the way.

Then he turns his attention to the magnificent world at his feet.

He seems to grow larger as he stares down. Like a man finally stepping into his righteous destriny.

And all the clever simulations of humanness fade from his features. He has no need of them now. He can just be himself.

His eyes are glacial as he stares down at the world at his feet.

DAVID (CONT'D)
"Better to rein in Hell, then serve
in Heaven."

Then...

He reaches out...

And presses a button.

EXT. DREADNOUGHT/PLANET - DAY

OUTSIDE THE DREADNOUGHT, the BOMB DELIVERY BAYS OPEN--

Thousands of BLACK URNS of XENOVIRUS drop, spinning, end over end--

Cascading down into the city below--

ENGINEERS going about their daily lives. Some glance up -- from work, play, sporting events -- barely having time to react before--

The BLACK URNS crash to the ground, into buildings, onto people -- SHATTERING--

Explosions of the terrible black liquid within -- like black napalm -- atomizing into ferocious, fast-moving clouds -- pestilence spreading on the air--

The ENGINEERS recoil, spin away, die in agony--

The briefest flash of the holocaust and then--

Cut to Black.

TITLE: PARADISE

As the TITLE FADE, we see that the darkness isn't complete. It's murky, moving. Flashes of energy. We are witnessing...

THE BIRTH OF A NEW STAR.

The dust moves faster, falling to an inner spinning core. FLASHES like heat lightning, until the hydrogen in the center IGNORES, bursting into BRIGHT FLAME--

A SHOCKWAVE is rippling out, CRASHING PAST US, OBLITERATING EVERYTHING--

Then we jump to a wider view.

We see the vast explosion is a tiny puff, the new star among many stars.

All is still and quiet. The serene ocean of space.

Until a TINY OBJECT whips past the edge of a nebula.

We find it, closing in on...

EXT. COLONY SHIP COVENANT

The COVENANT.

A COLONY SHIP; built for speed and distance. The STARS AROUND HER DISTORT, gravity LENSING as the ship moves faster than light.

TITLES:

TEN YEARS LATER

Deep-Space Colony Ship USCSS COVENANT

CREW: 14, +1 SYNTHETIC

PASSENGERS: 3600

MISSION: Terraform and Populate

DESTINATION: Origae-6

DATE: 2103, 239 light-years from Earth

The COVENANT is 500 meters long, trusses connect THREE PARTS; INTERSTELLAR DRIVE; CREW MODULE; TERRAFORMING BAY.

INT. COVENANT-VARIOUS

THE NURSERY

In a darkened PASSENGER CRYO-STASIS HOLD, a kiosk beeps, awakens. NAMES SPILL OUT on a screen crusted in ice. Dim green light flickers out over 3600 CRYO-PODS, under a thun blanket of snow .. The pods sweep up along the huge curbed wall, defying gravity...

We see the FROZEN FACES of... WOMEN, MEN, CHILDREN ... Also banks of EMBRYOS at various stages...

The kiosk finishes the inventory, and flickers out. Beep. All godes dark.

THE BRIDGE

EMPTY and DARK until... Blinds on the bridge windows OPEN. DISTANT SUNLIGHT spills over the captain's chair.

THE GALLEY

Large room, tables, cooking equipment. Where the crew congregates. SUNLIGHT slashes and moves across the room from the windows.

CREW QUARTERS

Nice, build for couples. We see family photos. Books. Clothes. Personalized.